1: Radcliffe-Brown Σ-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

844 Her legs are flexed so that her knees may be clasped by her arms. The only manipulation is pressure exerted on the upper part of the abdomen by one of the attendant women. The umbilical cord is severed with a knife, formerly of cane or bamboo, but in these days of iron. The after-birth is buried in the jungle. The infant is washed and then scraped with a *Cyrena* shell. After a few days he (or she) is given a coating of clay (*odiu*).

[846]

844 775 If a baby dies and within a year or two the mother again becomes pregnant, it is said that it is the same baby born again, and the name of the deceased child is given to it. Thus one woman had three children of the same name, the first two having died soon after birth. According to the native ideas this was really the same child born three times. It is only those who die in infancy that are thus reincarnated.

843 In the Northern tribes it is believed that a woman can tell the sex of her unborn child. If she feels it on the left side it is a male, because men hold the bow (the typical masculine implement) in the left hand. If she feels it on the right side it is a female, because it is in her right hand that a woman holds her fishing net.

842 A married man who is childless and desires a child will wear a *čiba* (sling of bark used for carrying children) round his shoulders when he is sitting in camp. The *čiba* and the way it is used for carrying children may be seen in the photograph in Plate XIV. If a childless woman wishes to have a child she may catch, cook and eat a certain species of small frog.

842 775 At a place called *Tonmuket* in the North Andaman there is a spot to which it is said that women may resort if they wish to become pregnant. On the reef at this spot there are a large number of stones which, according to the legend, were once little children. The woman who desires a child walks out on to the reef when the tide is low and stands upon these stones. It is believed that one of the baby souls will enter her body and become incarnate[1].

[1] I could not obtain any definite legend about these stones, but one informant said that when *Biliku* got angry and destroyed the world (see later, Chap. IV) the children all became stones at this place.

2: Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Soon after delivary, some warm
water is given to the woman to drink; she is also fed with meat-gravy, and the water in which shell or other fish have been boiled; after a time, should she desire it, fish, shell-fish, yams, or fruit are given her, but no meat.[1] During the first two or three days, she remains in a sitting posture, propped up by articles arranged so as to form a couch. As might be supposed, from the active habits and unsophisticated manners of these people, their women rarely suffer much during labour and child-birth; in fact, no instances of difficult delivery are known.[2]

12. For ear-ache, head-ache, and tooth-ache, recourse is had, in the first instance, to the *chàw·ga-tâ-*, then to scarification, should the pain continue and cause swelling.

13. In cases of skin disease, they afford relief, at least from irritation, by applying to the parts affected a large smooth stone previously warmed over a fire.

14. When a wound is inflicted by a thorn, stone, shell, &c., hot water is poured over it from a *Cyrena* shell, which is then heated and applied to the part as hot as it can be borne; or, if the injury be slight, sea-bathing is prescribed, as it is said to expedite the healing process. In treating a boil, they scarify all round the swelling in order to reduce the inflammation, and afterwards bathe it with *chū·lnga-* "lotion." This substance is also taken internally when suffering from dysentery, while for diarrhœa they swallow small quantities of a whitish clay, called *kôtrē·o-*.

15. The *larvæ* of bees found attached to honeycombs is eaten to correct constipation, or, if in season, the fruits of two trees, *ô·ropa-* and *chôb-*, which are much relished, and not without reason.

16. Their method of treating a case of epilepsy is to sprinkle the patient with cold water, and then to scarify his brow.

17. When bitten by a snake (especially a venomous one), if they succeed in killing it, they cut it open, and apply the kidney fat to the wound, rubbing it in for some time; should they fail in capturing the reptile, a ligament is tied above the bite, and the surrounding flesh is scarified. Deaths from snake bites, though not unknown, are rare. The late chief of the Middle Strait community died in a few hours from the bite of a certain tree snake called *tâ·ya-jō·bo-*,[3] in September, 1878, and another

[1] During menstruation they abstain from pork, *Paradoxurus*, turtle, honey, and yams, and live upon certain varieties of fish, sour fruits, iguanas, and prawns.

[2] The custom known by the name of *couvade*, or the paternal lying-in, is quite unknown among the Andamanese.

[3] This snake is said to be the most deadly, after which the *lá·raba-* and *wá·ra-jō·bo-* are the most dreaded. The last appears to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*. Further allusion to the *lá·raba-* and the *wá·ra-jō·bo-* will be made under "Superstitions."

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges

to the arid climate) are among the most wrinkled people in the world.

At birth, the Onges are tiny, attractive little creatures, very plump, but rarely over two and a half kilograms in males and two kilograms in females. I was very fortunate indeed in that I succeeded in persuading one young couple to let me examine their new-born child. Local superstition forbids a stranger looking on a child for any length of time, and even an Onge who does so is regarded with suspicion, so I had to be extremely cautious.

The infant was born on 30 March 1954, in the forest to the north of Labanar. Like most deliveries, birth took place in the forest on a bed improvised for the purpose, with only the father (on some occasions also the wife's mother) present, and the placenta was buried under the bed. The women recover very quickly;[1] after a few days they are fit for heavy work, returning to the group without any purification ceremonies, and this was no exception. After a wealth of gifts I managed to examine the child on the morning of 31 March and again on 10, 13 and 14 April. After this mother and child vanished completely, and the father would give me only evasive replies, although only a few days before he had been willing to help me open some graves round Tambe-e-buiè, allowing me to remove the bones of nine Onges who had been dead for many years; superstition (or the women) overcame him on this occasion, however.

My examinations were all carried out in the presence of the mother and at least two of the older women, who were determined to prevent me touching the child.

The child, like all Onge babies, had no body hair; this persists throughout life, though some males have sparse moustaches. Its head was covered with a very fine, sparse down, not black like the adults, but already showing signs of the characteristic woolly texture. Dark reddish-brown, the hair becomes black and tightly curled during the first year of life. The eyelashes curl markedly in adults, but the hair of the eyebrows is virtually straight; in the infant the former were barely visible, and the latter completely absent.

The nails were strong and well formed, projecting a little beyond

[1] Childbirth is normally very easy, but miscarriages are common, probably due to lack of vitality in the foetus.